

TESTIMONY
WATER RATES

IF YOU WISH TO SPEAK TO CITY COUNCIL, **PRINT** YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, AND EMAIL.

NAME (print)	ADDRESS AND ZIP CODE	Email
✓ Ploy Jones	2204 S.E. 57th Ln PDX	

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183832

From: Stephen Gerould <stephen@stephengerould.com>
Subject:
Date: May 26, 2010 9:40:34 AM PDT



Oregon Wild Testimony to Portland City Council

Regna Merritt, Executive Director

May 26, 2010

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

While we appreciate that Council voted against chemical filtration in July of 2009, Oregon Wild is opposed to construction of a UV system inside the Bull Run. We communicated this to Council in our July testimony and re-state it today. We are opposed to the proposed Water Bureau budget if it will finance the design of a UV facility in the watershed.

We understand that the City is between a rock and a hard place and must work on design of a UV plant. That said, any design we finance should be based on land outside of the watershed and at Lusted Hill, not inside the Bull Run.

We hope that we will never be forced to construct this facility.

We hope that the City, as advised by a huge number of neighborhood associations, businesses and medical professionals (including those specializing in infections disease) will secure legislative relief from the expensive and unreasonable requirements of the LT2 rule.

According to public health officials, there will be no measurable public health benefit from new treatments required by the EPA to address cryptosporidium.

However, should a UV plant be built inside the Bull Run, there will be increased risk to public health, to the Bull Run watershed and to the Sandy River.

Bringing mercury in UV bulbs into the Bull Run watershed increases risk.

Using drinking water pipes to catch mercury released from bulb breakage increases risk to those drinking Bull Run water.

In our last communication with the Water Bureau regarding this, we were told that drinking water conduits would be used to catch contaminated water and that a clear well was too expensive.

Where will mercury-laden water be dumped if there is an accidental release? Into the Sandy River?

Have the Bureau and this Council stipulated that a clear well be included in design of this plant?

And finally, how many non-native species will be brought into the Bull Run on tires and boots if the facility is constructed there?

Any UV facility design supported by this budget and financed by Portland ratepayers must be located outside of the watershed and with a clear well. If this is not the plan, we ask you to vote against this proposed budget.

Thank you.

--
Regna Merritt
Executive Director, Oregon Wild
503.283.6343 x 214
rm@oregonwild.org

Moore-Love, Karla

From: Fritz, Amanda
Sent: Wednesday, May 19, 2010 1:51 PM
To: Shaff, David
Cc: City Elected Officials; Moore-Love, Karla
Subject: CIP Budget

Hi, David,

Thank you for your presentation on the Water Bureau rate request this morning. I am not seeing the line item for the Emergency Management Westside Staging Area included in the Water Bureau proposed budget in the City of Portland Proposed Budget books. I'm looking at the Bureau Capital Program Project List on page 141 of Volume 1. Is it listed there, or somewhere else?

Thank you,

Amanda

Amanda Fritz
Commissioner, City of Portland

Please note new e-mail address: **amanda@portlandoregon.gov**

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Friends of the Reservoirs do not support the 12.9% water rate increase, an increase that according to the Water Bureau's financial plan translates to a 16.7 % increase to the typical residential water bill. Combined with last years 17.9 percent rate hike, an increase that translates to a 19.6 % water bill increase, residents will see a 36% increase in their water bills in just two years. Water bills are scheduled to double by 2015. These increases are not affordable.

Nearly 40% of the Water Bureau budget is debt service. With bonds scheduled to be issued on annual basis, this figure is sure to rise.

FOR do not support spending **\$12 million on consultant contracts** for further design of a **UV Radiation plant**, a plant that will likely never be built and should not be built.

City
The *x* must direct the Water Bureau to prepare a data document supportive of the available Safe Drinking Water Act "treatment technique" reservoir variance. Public money has already been spent on AwwaRF 3021 data collection, yet that data is kept hidden from the public. A broad-based group of community stakeholders do not support spending \$800 million with debt service for reservoir burial creating new risks and providing no measurable public health benefit. Ratepayers will continue to pay for the upwards of \$45 million in open reservoir upgrades for the next 25 years. Work is still being performed under the open reservoir upgrade contracts.

While FOR supported the Sandy River Crossing project, we do not support the nearly tripling of the costs of that project. There must be better controls on CIP projects costs. Addressing the ongoing issues with revolving door consultants will go a long way in controlling costs. At a December 2009 budget meeting the PWB proclaimed that the Sandy River project (SRX) was on budget. Having reviewed CH2M Hill project documents through a FOIA request, I knew this statement to be grossly inaccurate.

At the start of the SRX, the project was budgeted at \$12 million, a figure that included a **whopping 40% contingency on top of a 20% contingency for steel**, based on an actual quote. CH2M Hill provided the cost estimate.

An \$8 million project (or a \$12 million project with an enormous contingency) ended up costing ratepayers at least double if not triple. The final project cost is noted as \$22 million.

www.portlandonline.com/water/index.cfm?a=222271&c=48966

FOR support addressing long-deferred maintenance projects, but we do not support overlapping large maintenance and capital improvement projects as is the case in this budget, making water bills unaffordable.

I served on the Water Bureau Budget committee for 4-5 years between 2005 and 2009. The current Water Bureau budget committee does not represent the community. Water Bureau interns, relatives of Water Bureau employees, and a county employee are not representative of the broad-based community interests.



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Sam Adams, Mayor

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CITY OF PORTLAND

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Charles Van Rossen
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Advocacy

Lila Wickham
Public Interest
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Local Business
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Sharon Kelly
At-Large Member

Charles Rosenthal
At-Large Member

Bob Tomlinson
Staff Liaison, OMF
Financial Planning

Date: May 14, 2009

To: Mayor Sam Adams
Commissioner Nick Fish
Commissioner Amanda Fritz
Commissioner Randy Leonard
Commissioner Dan Saltzman
Auditor LaVonne Griffin-Valade

AUDITOR 05/14/10 PM 3:28

From: Portland Utility Review Board

Subject: PURB Testimony on FY 2010-11 Sewer, Solid Waste and Water Rates

On May 11, 2010, the Portland Utility Review Board (PURB) met to forward the following comments to Portland City Council concerning municipally regulated rates.

Members in attendance: Janis Adler, Vice Chair, Michael Crean, Bill Dayton, Sharon Kelly, Tracy Marks, Charles Rosenthal, Charles Van Rossen, and Lila Wickham.
One vacancy.

City Audit of Utility-Based Revenues

PURB thanks the City Auditor for scheduling a PURB-recommended audit of utility-based revenues collected by the Portland Water Bureau and BES to determine whether use of these revenues is utility-related. PURB looks forward to reviewing the audit results as soon as possible.

Budget Note to Hire Consultant

PURB thanks the Mayor for including a PURB-recommended request in the Proposed Budget to spend \$30,000 for a consultant to report on best practices for the public utility rate-setting process. The Water Bureau portion of this cost is \$9,000 and the BES portion is \$21,000.

Solid Waste and Recycling Rates

All PURB members support the rate increases as proposed, including enthusiastic support for the food scrap recycling program and purchase of durable lunch trays for use in Portland Public Schools.

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The Board does not support the purchase of public recycling containers. This proposal would spend \$720,000 over two years for the purchase of 400 containers at a unit cost of \$1,800 each.

Bureau of Environmental Services Rates

One PURB member did not support the following PURB comments.

The Board appreciates that the increase in the average, single-family sewer and stormwater bill will be less than it might have been. However, the PURB does not believe that non-core mission expenditures have been removed from the BES budget and does not support any bill increases, including the forthcoming 6.1% increase, that are not more in line with current cost-of-living increases.

Water Bureau Rates

The PURB continues to be concerned with Water Bureau efforts to mitigate large rate impacts by reducing internal costs. In 2006, the American Water Works Association completed a "QualServe Peer Review Report" for the PWB. The Report identified over 100 "opportunities for improvement" which, if implemented, could produce significant improvements in efficiency and effectiveness. Therefore, all PURB Board members support the following comment:

- Using the 2006 "*QualServe Peer Review Report*," the Water Bureau should expeditiously plan, design and execute a program that implements the most promising opportunities for improvement. The target goal would be a 15% reduction in controllable costs by 2015.¹ Results and progress on program goals should be periodically shared with such groups as the PURB and the Portland Water Bureau Budget Advisory Committee and should be included in the annual budget document. Sharing the PWB's progress will assure ratepayers that it is making every effort to operate in the most effective and efficient manner.

Other Comments

PURB Meeting Minutes

The PURB is at a disadvantage because it doesn't get its meeting minutes in a timely manner. This makes it difficult for the PURB to be as effective as it would like. The PURB recommends it receive designated administrative support so it can receive meeting minutes from one month *before* its meeting the next month.

PURB Appointments

Three positions on the PURB will be open for appointment as of June 30, 2010. The current at-large member, Sharon Kelly, has agreed to remain on the Board. PURB subcommittees ideally have three members each. No recommendation can be made without a quorum of 5 members. The PURB recommends the City find replacements as soon as possible and hopefully by its July, meeting.

¹ "Based on more than 100 water and wastewater utilities examined over the last five years, one firm reports that service delivery by public water and wastewater utilities is, on average, 24% more expensive than comparable private services." Association of Metropolitan Sewerage Agencies/Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies, Thinking, Getting, Staying Competitive: A Public Sector Handbook, Washington, DC, p. 3; EMA, Competiveness Assessment presentations, AMSA/AMWA, 1997